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"The general Scapegoat": Thoreau and Concord in 1844

Sterling ("Rick") Delano and Joel Myerson

Even devoted Thoreauvians may be more immediately aware of the importance of Ralph Waldo Emerson's "Address on Emancipation in the British West Indies" on August 1, 1844, than familiar with the details of Henry David Thoreau's actions that memorable day in Concord. Thoreauvians may be less familiar yet with Thoreau's apparent standing in the Concord community in the months preceding his sojourn at Walden. A first-hand account of events on August 1 provides a striking characterization of Thoreau as Concord's "general Scapegoat."

First, Emerson's "Address." At a June 1844 meeting in Concord of the Middlesex County Antislavery Society, it had been decided to commemorate "the anniversary of the Emancipation of the Slaves in the British West Indies, at Concord, on the coming first of August."[1] Concordians Anne Whiting, Cynthia, Helen, and Sophia Thoreau, Lidian Emerson, Mary Brooks, and others were determined to make the tenth anniversary celebration of West Indian emancipation a memorable event, inspired in part by the fact that it had been necessary to cancel the antislavery fair scheduled the previous summer in Concord. And now, as had happened the year before, there was difficulty once again securing a location in which to hold the meeting. Concord's local ministers—notably Barzillai Frost at the First Parish Church—refused the use of their churches, which prompted a surprising invitation from an unlikely couple on Monument Street. Sophia and Nathaniel Hawthorne offered the use of the expansive lawn at the Old Manse for the antislavery celebration.

As it turned out, the morning of August 1 was rainy, so antislavery proponents and sympathizers headed instead to the Court House. "We *took* the court-house," Anne Whiting proudly informed readers of the *Herald of Freedom*, "having understood," she acknowledged nonetheless, "that we should not probably be molested for so doing." But one problem still remained: no one was willing to ring a bell to announce the gathering. "Five or six individuals who were asked," Whiting notes, "declined for one or another reason." That's when Henry Thoreau, Whiting continues, "seeing the timidity of one unfortunate youth, who dared not touch the bell rope, took hold of it with a strong arm; and the bell . . . pealed forth its summons right merrily."[2] Emersonians and Thoreauvians alike know full well how consequential the sound of that bell was. With a large crowd now assembled at the Court House, Emerson delivered a two-and-a-half hour address on West Indian emancipation. The rest, as they say, is history.[3]

In the crowd that day to hear Emerson's address were two of Concord's newest residents, George William Curtis and his brother, Burrill. The young and attractive Curtis brothers had recently departed from the utopian Brook Farm community where they had spent more than a year (May 1842-August 1843) studying and working. They were drawn to Concord by their "enthusiastic admiration" for Emerson, which amounted—at least for Burrill—to a "high and intense 'hero-worship.'" But Emerson wasn't the only magnet. George P. Bradford, the brother of Concord's brilliant Sarah Alden Bradford Ripley, had departed Brook Farm himself just a few months after the Curtises (February 1844) and headed straight to the home of his old and dear friend, Waldo Emerson. Another former Brook Farmer with whom the brothers had developed a close friendship at the West Roxbury community was Isaac Hecker. Hecker, too, decided to move to Concord in April 1844 (where he ended up boarding at the Thoreau house), just a month before the Curtises did. Hecker, however, was on a spiritual quest—he eventually established the Order of Paulist Fathers—and he departed Concord just six weeks after George and Burrill's arrival.[4]

Hecker's departure was probably fortuitous, but it certainly proved timely because it prompted George Curtis to write to his

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friend right after Emerson delivered his address. In addition to Anne Whiting's report in the *Herald of Freedom*, Curtis's letter is the only other known surviving first-hand account of events in Concord on August 1, 1844. That fact in itself makes his remarks quite valuable. Not surprisingly, his letter to Hecker is not nearly as detailed as Whiting's article in the *Herald*, but it does corroborate the primary details that she provides. Much more interesting to Thoreauvians, however, is Curtis's characterization of Thoreau as the "general Scapegoat" in Concord. Curtis was not a native of Concord and thus he had an objectivity and perspective about what he saw going on around him that local Concordians might have lacked. In any case, his characterization of Thoreau may consist of only two words, but those words speak a great deal about Henry's reputation among his neighbors in the months prior to his experiment at Walden. (The Curtis brothers, it will be recalled, were among the distinguished group who helped raise the roof of Thoreau's cabin at the pond.)

In his letter, Curtis tells Hecker first about the occasion on August 1, 1844, noting that he thought that Emerson's address "was not of that cold, clear intellectual character that chills so many people, but full of ardent Life."[5] He then turns to their mutual friend Thoreau, who only that same morning had returned from a hiking expedition in the Catskills and the Berkshires with Ellery Channing. George and Burrill encountered Thoreau "on the 1st of August, in the church pulling the bells! It seems the people could get no one who could [i.e. would] ring it, the Sexton & some others having a fear of the respectability of the Town, so Henry, who I suppose is the general Scapegoat, not an hour home from his journey[,] pulls at the bells & tolls, & so ushers the orator into the hall with due dignity, for you must know that no church would open hospitable doors to the abolitionists & they were driven to the Court House. Therefore the Churches did receive execration dire."

Interestingly, at the same time that Curtis was writing to Hecker, Hecker was writing to Thoreau, proposing that they undertake a pilgrimage together to Europe. But Henry wrote back in mid-August, telling Hecker that while he was "strongly tempted" by the proposal, his "Genius will not let me go with you." In the weeks ahead, as it turned out, Thoreau seems to have exercised his body more than he did his "Genius," for he dug the cellar—and then lined it with stone—of what is now remembered as the Texas house.[6]

Notes

[1] Our summary is drawn from two sources: A[nne]. M[aria]. W[hiting].'s first-hand account in the *Herald of Freedom*, August 16, 1844; and Sandra Harbert Petrulionis, *To Set This World Right: The Antislavery Movement in Thoreau's Concord* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006), 40-45. Petrulionis provides additional context for the events leading up to the organization of the Concord antislavery fair on August 1, 1844.

[2] According to Concord resident F. B. Sanborn—who did not witness any of the events himself—Thoreau also went about the village banging on doors to announce that Emerson would speak. See Sanborn, *The Personality of Emerson* (Boston: C. E. Goodspeed, 1903), 88. See also James Elliot Cabot, *A Memoir of Ralph Waldo Emerson* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1887), 2: 430.

[3] In *Virtue's Hero: Emerson, Antislavery, and Reform* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1990), Len Gougeon notes that with the delivery of the address on West Indian emancipation, "There can be no doubt that in August 1844 Emerson made the transition from antislavery to abolition, and his association with organized abolitionists would continue to grow from this point forward" (85).

[4] For the Curtises and Emerson, see Edward Cary, *George William Curtis* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1900), esp. 17 and 23. For Brook Farm and Concord, see Sterling F. Delano, "Brook Farm and Concord: Transit Between Celebrated Communities," *Concord Saunterer*, n.s., 4 (Fall 1996): 22-43.

[5] Curtis to Hecker, August 4, 1844, Hecker Papers 2: no. 115, Paulist Fathers Archives, Washington, D.C. (quoted by permission). In *George William Curtis and the Genteel Tradition* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956), Gordon Milne quotes the passage about Thoreau. It is reprinted here because Milne's book—now more than half a century old—is not readily accessible, and, perhaps more importantly, because it's not likely that Thoreauvians would consult a book about George William Curtis for information about Thoreau.

[6] See Walter Harding, *The Days of Henry Thoreau* (New York: Dover, 1982), 164-167; and Raymond R. Borst, *The Thoreau Log: A Documentary Life of Henry David Thoreau, 1817-1862* (New York: G. K. Hall, 1992), 107-109.

"October Reflections"—photograph by Herbert Wendell Gleason, from Volume 11 of the 1906 Manuscript Edition of Thoreau's *Journal*.

Methinks the reflections are never purer and more distinct than now at the season of the fall of the leaf, just before the cool twilight has come, when the air has a finer grain. Just as our mental reflections are more distinct at this season of the year, when the evenings grow cool and lengthen and our winter evenings with their brighter fires may be said to begin.

***Journal*, October 17, 1858**

Packer and Gura on Transcendentalism: A Review

Lance Newman

Philip S. Gura. *American Transcendentalism: A History*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2007. 365p.

Barbara L. Packer. *The Transcendentalists*. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2007. 304p.

Two recent histories of Transcendentalism frame an important debate about the nature of the movement. Was Transcendentalism a small gathering of like-minded individualists who kept their distance from surrounding throngs of reformers in order to focus on self-culture and the literary arts, or was it a large, diverse association of radical intellectuals moved

by the common desire to transform every aspect of antebellum society from the life of the spirit to the hard realities of economic and social relations?

Barbara Packer's *The Transcendentalists* and Philip Gura's *American Transcendentalism* both aim to provide comprehensive narratives of the movement, so they tell much the same basic story. They begin with the factional wars between New England's Orthodox and Unitarian Congregationalists, explaining how the triumph of Lockean empiricism set the stage for the second Unitarian generation's discontent with rationalist theology. Younger ministers turned to the historicist biblical criticism of German philologists in order to dispense with miracles as proofs of scriptural authenticity, and then rethought both faith and moral awareness in intuitionist terms with the help of the Kantian distinction between reason and understanding. Transcendentalism emerged into self-awareness and public recognition through the meetings of Hedge's Club, the 1836 publication of several influential manifestos, and the infamous Miracles Controversy following Ralph Waldo Emerson's 1838 Divinity School Address. As the movement matured, sharp disagreements over the relationship between the self and society developed in the context of the depression of 1837-1844. Boston-based Transcendentalists were pulled into the period's culture of reform, including the campaigns for women's liberation, socialist association, and the abolition of slavery. Meanwhile, the Concord group that centered on Emerson kept their faith in the transformative power of their vocation of self-culture. As the depression gave way in the mid-1840s to renewed economic expansion and sectional polarization, the movement fragmented. Many prominent participants fell away, emigrating or converting, while those who remained no longer felt as urgently interested in the intuitive faith and philosophical idealism that had once unified them. Instead, they concentrated their energies on the increasingly pressing abolition movement as well as on pursuing careers as writers in the now solidly established literature industry. By the close of the Civil War, Emerson had taken his place as the elder statesman of the movement and as the foremost voice of the genteel tradition of American liberalism.

In addition to a common scope and outline, Packer and Gura's books share the plain style that has long been associated in Americanist circles with a rejection of much contemporary literary and critical theory. Both therefore also tend toward meticulously factual narration and a reluctance to engage in sustained interpretation. As a result, the divergences between the two books can appear to be little more than matters of emphasis. In fact, they take substantially different positions on the character and significance of Transcendentalism.

Packer's *The Transcendentalists* was written for publication as one of the book-length chapters in *Prose Writing, 1820-1865,* the second volume of *The Cambridge History of American Literature* (1995). So Packer marches quickly through the theological and philosophical debates of the formative years, then portrays the broad movement of the 1840s as the soil that produced her real subject, the flowering of literary expression in the works of the Concord group. Emerson is a constant touchstone. Close readings of his works, verging often on extended paraphrase, form the bulk of several chapters. The lives and writings of Amos Bronson Alcott, Henry David Thoreau, Margaret Fuller, and a few others are glossed by reference to Emerson's ideas and influence.

Meanwhile, figures like Orestes Brownson, George Ripley, Theodore Parker, and other participants in the reform wing of the movement play marginal roles framed in ways that closely parallel Emerson's sardonic judgments in his letters and journals. For instance, the relentlessly logical Brownson, who argued himself through several changes of faith and politics, is a figure of pathetic absurdity here. And Ripley's Brook Farm is represented as a "pasteboard-and-filigree" folly, significant mainly because Emerson refused to join, thereby exemplifying "the Transcendentalists' intense dislike of all forms of association" (158, 130). In short, Packer views Transcendentalism through the lens of the contemporary literary canon, seeing the movement as united by the Emersonian proposition that "*the individual is the world*" (1, emphasis in original). The many who disagreed with Emerson on just this point have been defined out of the movement, or at least exiled to its margins. Even members of the inner circle suffer the repetition of Emerson's often defensive opinions, as when Packer calls Thoreau's imprisonment in the Concord jail "ridiculous" (190). The overall result of this Emerson-centric approach is a double-edged exclusivity, one that allows Packer to focus closely on the writers and texts most valued by modern readers but that seriously distorts her mapping of the Concord group's position and significance within the broader movement. This approach also allows her to reach the bizarre conclusion that the North's victory in the Civil War fulfilled the Transcendentalists' "faith in the ultimate triumph of the moral law," confirming their belief that "the universe could be trusted" (274).

Gura's history may well have been written with Packer as an imagined discussant, since on several key points it challenges the interpretive tradition she synthesizes so effectively. Rather than a literary history, *American Transcendentalism* is a social history that starts by acknowledging that "no central creed . . . signaled membership" in the movement (4). Rather, it was an "ever-shifting and open-ended group," most of whose members were at some point associated with the Unitarianism of Harvard College. Most also shared an interest in German Idealism with its emphasis "on individual consciousness rather than on external fact" as the warrant of faith (5, 8). From the beginning, though, the movement was split over the implications of "universal divine inspiration," with Emerson and the Concord group emphasizing the absolute autonomy of the self, while Brownson, Ripley, Theodore Parker, and other reformers found the ground of a "democracy of the spirit," a radical egalitarianism that inspired them to confront the deep inequalities of race, gender, and class that structured antebellum society.

With this redefinition of the movement as his central thesis, Gura argues two main subordinate points. First, the movement was not just tangentially transatlantic, it was definitively so. Samuel Taylor Coleridge and Thomas Carlyle may have acted as mediators of European thought for Emerson and, to a lesser extent, Thoreau and Fuller. However, most of the movement's early leaders and interlocutors—including such key figures as James Marsh, Frederic Henry Hedge, and Elizabeth Palmer Peabody—were startlingly accomplished independent scholars of continental theology and philosophy, reading much more widely, critically, and productively than we have acknowledged in the works of the Cambridge Platonists, the Scottish Common Sense group, the German Idealists, and the French Eclectics and early socialists. Second, during the early and even the middle years of the movement, Emerson was a secondary figure, working "in the wings as people like Brownson, Ripley, and Alcott played center

stage" (96). Gura takes it as a challenge, then, "to account for Emerson's steady rise to prominence" until "Transcendentalism became identified through his vision of the imperial self" and "he was canonized as America's philosopher" (95, xv, 266). While Gura never gives a direct and precise answer to this question, he describes how Emerson parlayed the notoriety of his "Divinity School Address" into a career as a lyceum lecturer that placed him constantly in the public eye. Then, when the market economy rebounded and the 1840s culture of universal reform was replaced by the burning single-issue campaign to abolish slavery, Emerson's once "demanding philosophy of self-reliance" (xv) was simplified into a liberal individualism that neatly suited the needs of a now expansive capitalism.

Gura's long-looked-for and now indispensable book is marred only by the decision to devote his concluding chapters to the receding echoes of philosophical idealism in the Gilded Age. The implication is that Transcendentalism's most important legacy was the work of obscure philosophers and ministers like John Stallo, Cyrus Bartol, David Atwood Wasson, and Octavius Brooks Frothingham. But there were much more significant lines of continuity that better deserve to be traced. After the Civil War, Transcendentalism's reform wing gave place and inspiration to the many-stranded anticapitalism of the late nineteenth century, which saw a resurgence of communitarianism informed by the writings of John Ruskin, labor militancy on the railroads, agrarian socialism in the hinterlands, and the revolutionary communist and anarchist movements led by working-class German immigrants in the North's industrial cities. As Gura shows, while Transcendentalism may have begun as a series of philosophical and theological debates, it soon raised a direct and comprehensive challenge to American capitalism and its priorities. Its importance, then, is as the first flowering of a radical counterculture that has remained vital and continuous into the twenty-first century.

Despite their differences, both Packer's *The Transcendentalists* and Gura's *American Transcendentalism* should be required reading for all students of the period. Packer provides the best internal history of the Concord group and its literary accomplishments, while Gura gives us the comprehensive picture of the broad movement that we need to understand the debates that shaped the language and ideology of both canonical and less familiar texts.

New Book by TS Board Member

Joseph C. Wheeler—a member of the Thoreau Society Board of Directors—proudly displays a copy of his biography of his mother, *Ruth Robinson Wheeler: A Concord Life*, at a July 10, 2008, celebration at the birthplace of Henry David Thoreau on Virginia Road in Concord. The book was recently published by the Concord Free Public Library. Joe is accompanied by library friends (left to right) Constance Manoli-Skocay (Staff Assistant in Special Collections), Leslie Wilson (Curator), Joyce Woodman (former Staff Assistant), and Barbara Powell (Library Director). Ruth Wheeler was Concord's resident historian in the mid-twentieth century. Her *Concord: Climate for Freedom* (first issued in 1967) is still a basic source for many kinds of research. Mrs. Wheeler also published hundreds of newspaper articles on Concord historical topics, served actively on many municipal boards and committees, and was a founding member of the Thoreau Society, in which she played a leadership role on the Save Walden Committee (1957). Copies of Joe's biography of her are available for purchase at the Thoreau Society Shop at Walden Pond and the Concord Free Public Library circulation desk. *Photograph courtesy Rebecca Purcell.*

Further Particulars on Thoreau's Harvard Scholarship Awards

Edmund A. Schofield

According to Walter Harding, Henry Thoreau was "awarded twenty-five dollars as 'exhibition money' for his high grades" at the end of his first year at Harvard. At the end of his second year,

> he was awarded another twenty-five dollars as "exhibition money" and was asked to take part in a class honors exhibition on July 13, 1835, where he and Manlius S. Clarke gave a Greek dialogue on "Decius and Cato." . . . By taking advantage of a new college regulation, he dropped out for the entire second term [of his junior year] to earn a little money by teaching at a country school . . . Before the third term he was forced to leave campus because of illness . . . He missed more school, again because of illness, the first part of his senior year. . . But his final term, by dint of attending a large number of voluntary lectures, he was able to raise his rank to the nineteenth place. He thus received another twenty-five dollars as "exhibition money" on June 15, 1837, and was asked to take part in an honors "conference" with Henry Vose and Charles Wyatt Rice on

"The Commercial Spirit of Modern Times" at graduation.[1]

These awards were important for Thoreau's attainment of a college education.

In his reminiscence of Thoreau, Edward Waldo Emerson notes that even the "comparatively small amount which it then cost to maintain a boy at Harvard . . . was enough to strain the resources of the [Thoreau] family. The mother had saved for the emergency . . . the older sister had helped, the aunts reinforced, and Henry helped by winning and keeping a scholarship and . . . by teaching school for periods during the College course."[2] Henry Salt, in his life of Thoreau, states that Thoreau's interests at Harvard were promoted by Emerson, who had moved to Concord in 1834. "Emerson presumably was informed by Dr. [Ezra] Ripley, with whom he was staying, of the promise shown by Henry Thoreau, and it seems to have been due to his good offices that the young man received some small pecuniary assistance from the beneficiary funds of the college."[3] Given the Thoreau family's strained budget, this "small pecuniary assistance" of twenty-five dollars a year, awarded on the basis of Thoreau's high grades (though initially, it appears, primarily through the intercession of Emerson), may have spelled the difference between Thoreau's staying in college and dropping out for lack of money. I here report on the ultimate source and administration of the four annual awards made to Thoreau during his Harvard career despite all of the illnesses and other vicissitudes he faced while there, and show that Emerson himself had benefited from the same scholarship fund when he was at Harvard.

F. B. Sanborn, in his biography of Thoreau, states, "I have understood that he received the income of the same modest endowment which had been given to William and Ralph Waldo Emerson when in college, some years before."[4] This was, in fact, the case. The record shows that Thoreau and both William and Ralph Waldo Emerson (and a number of other Emersons as well) all received modest scholarships from the legacy of James Penn (ca. 1601–1671), an elder of the First Church of Christ in Boston, where the Emersons' father, William, was once minister. Penn was a beadle, whose duty it was "to attend upon the Governor, and always to be ready to execute his commands in public business," as well as an innkeeper licensed to draw wine "for so long time as he keep entertainment for the court in Boston." Penn arrived in Boston around 1630, but it is not known from where.[5]

In his will, dated July 29, 1671, Penn gave to his "Kinsman Penn Townsend all [his] Farm at Pullin [Pullen] Point," which was situated in what later would be known as North Chelsea and Winthrop,

> [p]rovided that he pay Ten pounds yearly out of the Farm to my Overseers, and after their Death, To the Elders, and Deacons of the First Church of Christ in Boston, succes[s]ively for ever by them to be dissposed of for the Maintenance of such poor Scholar or Scholars at the Colledge as they shall see good; And if God shall please to take away by death Penn Townsend before he have any Issue Lawfully begotten of his body, or leave no Issue, Then my Will is that my Farm be wholly for the maintenance of Poor Scholars as aforesaid.[6]

According to Walter K. Watkins, writing in the *New-England Historical and Genealogical Register*,

> The Elder Penn annuity of £10 in 1671 was paid to the elders or deacons of the First Church of Boston for the use of students, and was paid by the Sale family of Chelsea up to 1866 . . . On 12 April, 1866, a resolve was passed by the Massachusetts General Court allowing the annuity to cease by the sale of the real estate, $600 being paid the First Church as a release, and that sum invested for the purpose originally intended. The land in question was Round Top Hill in Beachmont now [1898] owned by the City of Boston.[7]

In his history of the First Church in Boston, Arthur B. Ellis records that Ralph Waldo Emerson had received awards from the proceeds of the Penn legacy in July 1817 (the month of Thoreau's birth), July 1818, July 1819, and July 1820.[8] Thoreau—whose name Ellis renders in its revised order, "Henry David Thoreau"—received awards from the same legacy in 1834, 1835, 1836, and 1837. In Thoreau's case, Ellis's transcription from the original documentation does not specify the months during which the awards were made, nor the amount of the awards. However, nearly all awards from the Penn legacy between 1720 and 1827 were made in July.[9]

Richard D. Pierce, editor the First Church's records, reports Thoreau's awards more completely and faithfully than did Ellis eight decades earlier.[10] He cites the following: July 17, 1834, David Henry Thoreau; June 18, 1835, David H. Thoreau; June 16, 1836, David H. Thoreau; June 15, 1837, D. H. Thoreau. But Kenneth Cameron, in *Thoreau's Harvard Years*, writes, "On June 16 [1836], when 'exhibition money' was awarded to the Juniors, Thoreau was not listed," referring to "College Records, VII, folio 426" as his source.[11] Thoreau had left campus about three weeks earlier because he had taken sick. Nevertheless, the records of the First Church of Boston clearly state that "David H. Thoreau" received an award on June 16, 1836.

On December 2, 1835 (during his junior year), Thoreau left for Canton, Massachusetts, to teach school under the direction of Orestes Brownson. He returned to Harvard on March 20, 1836, but around May 21 left because of illness.[12] While in Canton, however, he sent back to Harvard two assignments, for both of which he received credit toward graduation, and during the two months he was able to spend on campus before taking sick (March 20–ca. May 21, 1836), he received additional credit for work done. Thus, despite the teaching stint in Canton and subsequent illness, Thoreau was enrolled in Harvard and still completing assignments.

The discrepancy between Cameron's analysis and the records of the First Church no doubt arises from the fact that "neither the funds nor [their] distribution were under the control of the [Harvard] Corporation," but of the elders of the First Church of Christ in Boston.[13] Thoreau's sporadic attendance during the second and third terms of his junior year has also contributed to misinterpretation of his scholarship history. Though physically present at Harvard for only two months during those terms, he continued to make progress toward graduation, earning high grades, and therefore received an award from the Penn legacy. As Henry Salt asserted, Thoreau was actually given "some small pecuniary assistance" from the Penn legacy during each of his four years at Harvard by (in Edward Emerson's words) "winning and keeping a scholarship"—however, not directly "from the beneficiary funds of the college," but rather from the elders of the First Church of Boston.

Commenting on the results of his entrance examination, Josiah Quincy, President of Harvard, told Thoreau in 1833, "You have barely got in." Given the difficulties Thoreau faced while "in," it seems a wonder he ever made it "through" Harvard at all. But the support of his family, of Emerson, and of the Penn legacy—together with his superior grades—ensured that he did

make it through, despite the frequent bouts of illness and financial straits that dogged him during his entire four years at Harvard.[14]

Notes

[1] Walter Harding, *The Days of Henry Thoreau* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1965), 36. Kenneth Walter Cameron, in *Thoreau's Harvard Years* (Hartford: Transcendental Books, 1966), 13–19, gives a detailed analysis of every term Thoreau spent at Harvard.

[2] Edward Waldo Emerson, *Henry Thoreau As Remembered by a Young Friend* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1917), 16-17.

[3] Henry S. Salt, *The Life of Henry David Thoreau* (London: Richard Bentley & Son, 1890), 17.

[4] Franklin B. Sanborn, *Henry D. Thoreau* (Boston: Houghton, Mifflin, 1891), 52.

[5] Robert Charles Anderson, "James Penn," in *The Great Migration Begins: Immigrants to New England 1620–1633* (Boston: New England Historic Genealogical Society, 1995), 3: 1423.

[6] "Extracts from the Will of Mr James Penn bearing date the 29th of the 7th month 1671. And recorded Lib. VII, page 153," in Richard D. Pierce, ed., *The Records of the First Church in Boston 1630–1868*, 2: 458-459. Publications of the Colonial Society of Massachusetts, 40 (Boston, 1961).

[7] Walter K. Watkins, "Benefactions to Harvard College Located in Chelsea, Mass.," *New-England Historical and Genealogical Register* 52 (January 1898): 64.

[8] "Disposition of Elder Penn's Legacy," in Arthur B. Ellis, *History of the First Church in Boston* (Boston: Hall and Whiting, 1881), 340.

[9] Ellis, *History of the First Church*, 338-340. Beginning with 1828, neither the date nor the month of awards is specified.

[10] Pierce, *The Records of the First Church in Boston*, 2: 468.

[11] Cameron, *Thoreau's Harvard Years*, 17.

[12] Cameron, *Thoreau's Harvard Years*, 16-17.

[13] Andrew McFarland Davis, "The Exhibitions of Harvard College Prior to 1800," *New-England Historical and Genealogical Register* 46 (July 1892): 236.

[14] Apparently, the last award from the Penn bequest was made in 1883 to Wallace Nutting (1861–1941), the well known photographer of New England antiquities and author of the "State Beautiful" series. The record of his award is cited by Pierce (468, n. 2) as located in "the Pulsifer copy of First Church Records." The "Pulsifer copy" also records that Edmund Q. S. Osgood received an award from the Penn bequest in 1874.

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In Memoriam: Stephen F. Ells (1935-2008)

J. Walter Brain

Steve Ells and I first met in the field one sunny spring morning years ago. Aware that we were both observing bobolinks, we began to compare notes. From then on, in a concerted effort to spare habitat for these impetuous singers' moment in the sun and for other grassland birds as well, we ranged over fields in Lincoln and Concord, tracking habitat and behavior—Lincoln's Browning Fields, Boyce Farm, or Codman Farm Meadow (where Steve lighted upon the rare and elusive Henslow's Sparrow), and, in Concord, Mattison Field or David Emerson's rolling Estabrook field, where Eastern meadowlarks used to nest. Steve took the lead in persuading the Town of Lincoln to set aside two town conservation fields as bobolink sanctuaries, with mowing dates subordinated to the success of the birds' nesting cycle.

Lover of nature, admirer and advocate of Henry Thoreau's philosophy, and a conservationist at heart, Steve Ells lent his talent and energy in the line of battle to preserve Thoreau Country. Foremost, he spearheaded the campaign by local conservationists to stop the Middlesex School's expansion plans into the Estabrook Woods—a long, drawn-out fight that he carried on single-handedly toward the end, when hope of fortunate outcome had been dashed, the powers-that-be prevailing in the desecration of those hallowed woods.

Steve's two outstanding and exhaustively researched pieces of writing on Estabrook—works central to his magnanimous legacy—grew out of that battle. His book-length article titled "Henry Thoreau and the Estabrook Country: A Historic and

Personal Landscape" appeared in the Fall 1996 issue of the Thoreau Society's *Concord Saunterer*. Steve first published his book *The Seasons in Estabrook Country: An Anthology about the Cycle of the Year and this Landscape* in 1999, and in revised form in 2000. Steve presented a copy of this work to me with the words, "Walter, Please accept this final edition. You are the perfect person for whom I wrote it. Steve." How flattering!

The July 10, 2008, *Concord Journal* obituary includes the following facts of Steve's life:

> Stephen Frank Ells, 73, died peacefully Monday, June 30, 2008, from his illness at residence after a long devotion to his family and the environment.
>
> Born in Boston in 1935, he grew up in Waltham on Trapelo Farm. He was a graduate of the Belmont Hill School, Harvard University and Harvard Law.
>
> As a lieutenant commander in Naval Intelligence, he endured trying times with the East aboard the USS Midway.
>
> During his career he was with Choate, Hall and Stuart Law Firm, the State Department of Natural Resources, the Conservation Law Foundation, the Massachusetts Area Planning Council, and was Governor Frank Sargeant's [sic] chief legal council [sic]. He then worked tirelessly to clean up Boston Harbor and the rest of the region while at the Environmental Protection Agency until retirement in 1990.
>
> During retirement he continued his dedication to his family, land preservation and a life-long love of birds. The furthering of his mother's genealogical work proved invaluable. His efforts for Estabrook Woods and Thoreau country in general spoke volumes. Even the bobolinks benefited from his time here.

A principled, persistent man, in all.

I wrote to Steve in the midst of a struggle to avert the loss of another piece of our historic patrimony, "O, thank the sylvan gods I have an ally in you." We are going to miss you, Steve, in tomorrow's trials; though rest assured that in springs to come your bobolinks will continue to hover in the sun in an apotheosis of flitting wings and triumphal warble.

Estabrook Cellar Holes
For Stephen Ells, 1999

J. Walter Brain

Crumbling in a dent in the earth,
Walls of weathered fieldstone,
Clad with lichens and moss,
Draped with partridgevine and fern,
Are all that's left of lives
That long ago transmuted light
Into flesh and voices loud
As the speech of jays this morn.

Kibbe, Adams, Estabrook, Flint, Boaz Brown,
Their sinews kneaded into schist and gneiss
Of rocks they set by dint of heart and brawn,
Lent their names to these stony cradles,
Each a lifetime's imprint upon the ground.
Has not that been enough, clearing the land,
Digging wells, planting orchards,
Hewing out a house from the howling wild,
For their lives not to have been lived in vain?
Beauty and victory inform these cellar holes
As they did once inform curls of blue smoke
That from these men's hearths to the heavens rose.

Thoreau on Estabrook

Crossed on to the Old Carlisle Road by the house N of Isaiah Green's & then across the road through the woods to the Paul Adam's House by Bateman's Pond . . .

What shall this great wild tract over which we strolled be called— Many farmers have pastures there & wood lots—& orchards— It consists mainly of rocky pastures— It contains what I call the Boulder Field— the Yellow Birch swamp—The Black-Birch Hill—the Laurel Pasture—The Hog Pasture—The White Pine Grove—The Eastebrooks Place—The Old Lime-Kiln— the Lime Quarries—Spruce swamp The Ermine Weazel Woods— Also the Oak Meadowss [Meadows]— the Cedar Swamp—The Kibbe Place—& the Old Place N W of Brooks Clarks— Ponkawtasset bounds it on the S. There are a few frog ponds & an old mill pond within it & Bateman's Pond on its edge— What shall the whole be called— The Old Carlisle Road which runs through the middle of it is bordered on each side with wild apple pastures—where the trees stand without order having many if not most of them sprung up by accident or from pomace sown at random & are for the most part concealed by birches & pines— These orchards are very extensive & yet many of these appletrees growing as forest trees bear good crops of apples. It is a paradise for walkers in the fall. There are also boundless Huckle berry Pastures as well as many blue-berry swamps— Shall we call it the Easterbrooks Country It would make a princely estate in Europe—yet it is owned by farmers—who live by the labor of their hands— & do not esteem it much. Plenty of huckle berries & barberries here—

***Journal*, June 10, 1853**

"Curly-pate Hill, above Bateman's Pond"—photograph by Herbert Wendell Gleason, from Volume X of the 1906 Manuscript Edition of Thoreau's *Journal*.

Environment: A Review

Rochelle Johnson

Glenn Adelson, James Engell, Brent Ranalli, and K. P. Van Anglen, eds. *Environment: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008. 950p.

Members of the Thoreau Society would likely agree that Thoreau devoted his life to what we now call environmental studies, which the editors of this new anthology define as "efforts to understand the interrelated systems and phenomena of nature, including the human presence in those systems and its effects on them" (2). From his striving to "know" beans to his claims on behalf of wildness, from his devotion to cataloging the natural phenomena of his region to his insight into the relationship between humans and their landscapes, Thoreau pursued deep environmental study. As he seemed to understand, this is a discipline to which physical data and aesthetic theory are both relevant. It is as concerned with philosophical idealization as with practical policy-making and devoted equally to solving global crises and local problems.

Of course, environmental studies represents a field that has emerged formally only in the last four decades. In that short time, it has become popular among undergraduates in the United States and the impetus for the formation of several new professional organizations. Some of these entities (the American Society for Environmental History and the Association for the Study of Literature and Environment, for example) are related to traditional disciplines. Others (the nascent Association for Environmental Studies and Sciences among them) attempt to include the whole endeavor. (The AESS—as its Web page at http://aess.info/ states—aspires to join together teachers in the "one-thousand-plus interdisciplinary environmental programs in North America and around the world.") Today, environmental studies integrates disciplines traditionally scattered across separate university and college departments, encompassing the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the humanities. As the editors of the anthology *Environment* assert in their introductory essay, "If we are to direct intelligently how our activities affect Earth and life on Earth (including our own lives), then it becomes vital to study institutions, beliefs, values, laws, economies, and history in light of what we know about the natural world" (1-2). Ideally, the editors explain, mastery of environmental studies involves learning key concepts in traditional disciplines in order to "mediate between" (2) those disciplines, discover "the constituent elements of larger problems and issues," combine "the results of an appropriate set of these disciplines," and possibly even "foster new ones." The goal, of course, is practical: "to address environmental issues and to resolve environmental problems" (3).

Until the publication by Yale University Press of *Environment: An Interdisciplinary Anthology*, those searching for an overview of the field had few texts to which they might turn. While several volumes focused on some important aspects of the field, very few offered comprehensive treatments. Collections emphasizing the humanities include Derek Walls's *Green History* (Routledge, 1994), which provides selections in environmental literature, philosophy, and politics; Carolyn Merchant's *American Environmental History* (Columbia University Press, 2007), which surveys and defines the environmental history of the United States; and *The Ecocriticism Reader* (University of Georgia Press, 1996), which broke new ground by defining an environmental approach to literary scholarship through selected essays in literary and cultural studies. For treatments of controversial environmental issues occupying popular culture, one could consult *The Environmental Predicament* (Bedford St. Martin's, 1995), which offers clustered readings on topics related to social values and public policy, or the Taking Sides series on environment, which offers another perspective on hot topics through readings from opposing political and scientific positions (13th ed., McGraw Hill, 2008). For a more scientifically-oriented exploration, one might turn to any of a number of textbooks in environmental science or ecology, or to a collection such as *Environment* in McGraw Hill's Annual Editions series (now in its twenty-seventh edition).

One obvious exception to the earlier dearth of truly interdisciplinary volumes is Theodore D. Goldfarb's *Notable Selections in Environmental Studies* (2nd ed., Dushkin/McGraw Hill, 1999), now in a slightly revised edition (edited by Thomas Easton and published as part of McGraw Hill's Classic Edition Sources series, 2008). *Notable Selections* and Yale's new anthology, *Environment*, have much in common. Both feature writings by prominent figures in environmental studies; both cover a wide range of topics representing the sciences, social sciences, and humanities; and both provide brief introductions to each selection within. Several authors are represented in both volumes, and both feature a few groupings of essays on similar topics. *Notable Selections*, however, lacks an introductory essay, whereas *Environment* opens with an essay that attempts to explain what environmental studies *is*, how one practices it, and why in-depth interdisciplinary study is necessary for its success. And unlike *Environment*, *Notable Selections* does not represent Thoreau at all.

In addition to an introductory essay, the editors of *Environment* provide explanations for their selections, discussions of the historical importance of particular selections, and descriptions of the threads that link diverse essays representing politics, international science, and academic dialogue. They thus build a helpful scaffolding for their volume, encouraging readers to make connections, understand the context for what they are reading, and synthesize concepts meaningfully from the varied selection of individual pieces. In addition, the "Coda" section of *Environment* offers a meditation, claiming that a true understanding of environmental issues in their full complexity will require "nothing less than a redefinition of what it means to be human" (xxi).

The anthology is divided into two main parts, each of which explores issues such as gender and internationality. Part 1—"Concepts and Case Studies"—groups essays on concepts central to environmental studies (climate shock, sustainable development, and globalization, for example). Each cluster begins with an introductory essay defining the concept, providing context for its discussion, and offering suggestions for further reading, and each reflects the range of possible disciplinary approaches. (The cluster on "Wilderness," for example, includes selections from Thoreau, activist Robert Marshall, philosopher Roderick Nash, historian William Cronon, and poet Gary Snyder; the one on climate shock includes both scientific essays and a poem by Seamus Heaney.) This feature helps readers form a basic understanding of the big issues in the field, while also demonstrating the relevance of multiple approaches to considering the concept under discussion.

Part II of *Environment* offers clusters of essays on "Foundational Disciplines and Topics." This section demonstrates the interdisciplinary nature of the field through sections devoted to the three major disciplinary divisions as they are usually represented on college campuses: the sciences (titled "Biological Interactions" and including some chemistry and physics); the humanities (titled "Human Dimensions" and including spirituality, ethics, and writing, but not music or art); and the social sciences (titled "Social Connections" and including politics, economics, anthropology, and population issues). These major sections gather essays on topics as diverse as "Soil and Agriculture," "Poetry," and "Law and Environmental Justice." The sub-sections, too, are preceded by interpretive essays elucidating contexts and selections. Clearly, *Environment* goes a long way toward representing the capaciousness of the field while also providing readers with grounding treatments of foundational concepts, explorations of pressing topics, and a sense of the complexity of particular issues.

Given our interest in Thoreau, it comes as a reassurance, perhaps, that this sizeable anthology awards him a prominent position. First, in the section in Part I titled "What is Wilderness and Do We Need It," we find a few pages from Thoreau's "Walking" (the passage containing "in Wildness is the preservation of the world"). Thoreau's work thus establishes the historical nature of any discussions of wilderness (as does the section from William Bradford's *Journal*, which precedes it). We encounter Thoreau again in Part II's sub-section "Nature Writing," where appear brief portions of "The Bean-Field" chapter of *Walden* and the "Ktaadn" section of *The Maine Woods*. Here, among Bashō, Gilbert White, and Annie Dillard, we find Thoreau exemplifying the rich tradition of Anglo-European nature writing.

Thoreau's writings comprise just over seven pages in this sizeable collection. For many of us in the Thoreau Society, these seven pages may not seem quite enough. But given the rich history and growing vibrancy of environmental studies, they are probably just about right. In a comprehensive reading of this large anthology, one sees Thoreau as an early, passionate voice on behalf of both the complexity of the human-nature relationship and the necessity of attending closely to natural phenomenon in the course of our daily lives. That's probably just about where we'd want him to be.

Additions to the Thoreau Bibliography

Robert N. Hudspeth

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———. *Excursions*, edited by Joseph J. Moldenhauer. Reviewed by Robert DeMaria Jr. in *Amherst* 60, No. 4 (Summer 2008): 43-44. "The text is pure Thoreau, but Moldenhauer deserves a world of credit for making it what it is."

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We are indebted to the following individuals for information used in this *Bulletin*: Joseph J. Moldenhauer and Richard Winslow III. Please keep your editor informed of items not yet added and new items as they appear.

"Old Chestnut Trees on a Hilltop in Boxboro"—photograph by Herbert Wendell Gleason, from Volume 14 of the 1906 Manuscript Edition of Thoreau's *Journal*.

We next walked across the open land by the road to the high hill northeast of Boxboro Centre. In this neighborhood are many very large chestnuts . . .

These . . . trees are evidently the relics of one chestnut wood of which a part remains and makes the northwest part of Inches Wood, and the trees are all within about a quarter of a mile southeast and northwest . . .

***Journal*, November 16, 1860**

www.thoreausociety.org

Call for Papers for a Thoreau Society Session at ALA in 2009

"Experiential Education: Following in Thoreau's Footsteps"

We invite abstracts for a round table at a Thoreau Society session at the American Literature Association conference in Boston, May 21-24, 2009, on how we can educate students today to practice Thoreau's methods of learning, that is, his desire to have an "original relation to the universe" by exploring it. In the twenty-first century, is an original Thoreauvian experience feasible for our students? Whether as observers of natural history, practitioners of civil disobedience, or experimenters with a simple life, how can we demonstrate for students how they can incorporate Thoreau's deliberate consciousness? Can students learn from studying Thoreau's life how they, too, might ignite their passions for learning, reacquaint themselves with their senses, and follow their individual convictions?

Please send a brief (one- or two-paragraph) abstract to Sandy Petrulionis (shp2@psu.edu) and Laura Dassow Walls (wallsld@mailbox.sc.edu) by January 23, 2009.

President's Column

Tom Potter

Spending less time out of doors during the winter months, we are often able to catch up on some recent titles. I'd like to suggest three that you will find both interesting and informative. Two are recent examinations of Transcendentalism, each taking a slightly different approach to the subject but, in my opinion, complementing the other.

The Transcendentalists by Barbara Packer is a well-informed study of the Transcendental movement as it passed from the German school through the British authors and finally rested in New England with the young Unitarian ministers. Packer provides insight into the development of the thinking of many familiar figures in search of a broader definition of their faith. Of the two Transcendental titles, I recommend Packer's book as a first read, since it covers a number of familiar personalities in detail, setting the stage for the more expansive study, *American Transcendentalism*, by Philip F. Gura.

In Gura's work, we not only read of European influence and the development of some of the less-known figures in the United States and abroad, but we also explore the evolution of the movement into the late nineteenth century. There we witness the formation of two significant groups as they redefine their "theologies." Gura brings the century to a close with an examination of the Idealists and the Materialists as their search for a meaningful faith continues. He introduces us to a number of important figures of this late era, including David Wasson and O. B. Frothingham, both of whom expanded the horizons of influence from the earlier Transcendental movement.

These comments are too brief to do justice to Packer and Gura. For a fuller treatment, let me refer you to Lance Newman's review of their books in this issue of the *Thoreau Society Bulletin*. Then, too, you might want to look up Michael Branch's article "Transcendentalisms" in *Nineteenth-Century Prose* (vol. 35, no. 2). And, by the way, Richard Schneider, past editor of the Thoreau Society's *Concord Saunterer* and a former member of the TS Board of Directors, also has a nice article on "Thoreau's Human Ecology" in the same issue of *NCP*.

The third good read is the Pulitzer Prize-winning *Eden's Outcasts* by John Matteson. This is a wonderful new work on Louisa May and Bronson Alcott. It offers a good bit of information about Bronson's experiments in living and learning, including Fruitlands and his many educational endeavors. Limited space here prevents adequate expression of the praise this book deserves. But you'll have the opportunity to hear its author yourselves and to form your own judgment of his work. The Thoreau Society has fortunately secured John Matteson as the keynote speaker for the 2009 Annual Gathering. Read *Eden's Outcasts* in preparation for the event.

I wish you all good reading. Keep in mind that the above-mentioned works are available online through the TS shop at Walden Pond.

Please submit items for the Winter *Bulletin* to your editor before January 5, 2009

Leslie Perrin Wilson
lwilson@minlib.net

"Frost Crystals"—photograph by Herbert Wendell Gleason, from Volume 1 of the 1906 Manuscript Edition of Thoreau's *Journal*.

In the side of the high bank by the leaning hemlock, there were some curious crystallizations. Wherever the water, or other causes, had formed a hole in the bank—its throat and outer edge—like the entrance to a citadel of the olden time, bristled with a glistening ice armor[.] In one place you might see minute ostrich feathers, which seemed the waving plumes of the warriors filing into the fortress, in another the glancing fan-shaped banners of the Liliputian host—and in another the needle-shaped particles collected into bundles resembling the plumes of the pine, might pass for a phalanx of spears.

***Journal*, December 23, 1837**

Notes & Queries

Thanks to the contributors to this issue of the *Thoreau Society Bulletin*: **J. Walter Brain**, an old friend of the late Stephen F. Ells and a resident of Lincoln, Massachusetts, serves on the Thoreau Society Board of Directors; **Sterling ("Rick") Delano** is the author of a recent book about Brook Farm and of numerous articles about Transcendentalism and American Fourierism; **Rochelle Johnson** teaches environmental studies and American literature at the College of Idaho, and has a book forthcoming in May 2009 (*Passions for Nature: Nineteenth-Century America's Aesthetics of Alienation*); **Joel Myerson** is Carolina Distinguished Professor, Emeritus (University of South Carolina), author and editor of numerous publications relating to nineteenth-century American literature, including *Studies in the American Renaissance* (1977-1996), and a past president of the Thoreau Society; **Lance Newman**, Associate Professor of English at Westminster College of Salt Lake City, is the author of *Our Common Dwelling: Henry Thoreau, Transcendentalism, and the Class Politics of Nature* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); trained in biology, ecology, and botany, **Edmund Schofield** shifted his research focus to Thoreau in the late 1970s and from 1990 to 1992 served as president of the Thoreau Society.

Bob Hudspeth notes Paul Theroux's Thoreauvian response to Sarah Palin's Republican vice-presidential nomination. Theroux's op-ed piece on the subject (*Los Angeles Times*, September 14, 2008) refers to Thoreau's aversion to the killing of moose.

The July 14, 2008, issue of the *Laker*—a New Hampshire tourist publication—includes an article about a recent hike up Red Hill, in the vicinity of Lake Winnepesaukee and Squam Lake. **Rick Delano** discovered the report of the outing, which was organized by the Lakes Region Conservation Trust to commemorate Thoreau's July 5, 1858, climb up the hill.

Corinne Smith sends word of the release by Silver Hollow Audio of a CD/audiobook version of Thoreau's essay "Autumnal Tints." Silver Hollow founders Brett and Rebecca Barry are considering the production of an audio "Ktaadn" from *The Maine Woods*, as well. Additionally, Corinne observes the publication in the *Boston Sunday Globe Magazine* (May 18, 2008; also in boston.com) of a long passage from "Provincetown" in Thoreau's *Cape Cod*. The text and accompanying images are from the 2008 Houghton Mifflin edition with photographs by Scot Miller.

From Bangor, Maine, **John Grillo** writes of the home of Thoreau's Thatcher relatives on Essex Street there. John wonders whether an effort might be organized to place the unmarked house on the U.S. Department of the Interior's National Register of Historic Places. John found a book—*The Story of Bangor: A Brief History of Maine's Queen City* (1999)—providing information on Thoreau's cousins in Bangor and his visits to their home.

Jim Dawson relates the sale on January 20, 2008, for $110.49 of the 1964 Oriole Press pamphlet *Love*, containing text from a letter by Thoreau to H. G. O. Blake, a poem by Ellery Channing, and woodcuts by Bernard Sleigh (Borst, *Henry David Thoreau: A Descriptive Bibliography*, A6.2). The item was published in an edition of only fifty copies, none of which were for sale. Jim also reports that on May 7, 2008, a Thoreau manuscript fragment found in a copy of Channing's biography of Thoreau sold for $1,631.99. Beth Witherell tentatively identified the fragment as from a lecture on reform that Thoreau was planning.

Thanks to **Antonio Casado da Rocha** for passing along a call for essays and photographs relating to climate change for the projected spring 2009 online and limited hardcover publication of *Thoreau's Legacy: American Stories about Global Warming*. The book represents a joint project of the Union of Concerned Scientists and Penguin Classics. The essays are to consist of brief first-person accounts (200-500 words) of global warming as it has affected the writers' lives and surroundings. For additional details, see the UCS website, at http://www.ucsusa.org/americanstories/.

Austin Meredith is compiling thumbnail biographies for an online project to identify every person mentioned in *Walden* and to match this information with the appropriate passages from Thoreau's text. The names included range from the universally-recognized (Napoleon Bonaparte) to the Concord-specific (Dr. Josiah Bartlett). We hope to include more about this effort in a future issue of the *Bulletin*.

The Concord Free Public Library and Louisa May Alcott's Orchard House have collaborated in the preparation of a joint exhibition about May Alcott—Louisa May Alcott's youngest sister—as an artist. May's 1869 *Concord Sketches* image of Thoreau's "Hermitage at Walden Pond" is among the items shown. On view in the CFPL gallery throughout November and December 2008 and January 2009, the display is accompanied by a three-part lecture series, featuring Daniel Shealy on November 22, 2008, John Matteson on December 6, 2008, and Joel Myerson on January 17, 2009. See the events listing on the CFPL website (http://www.concordlibrary.org/scollect/events.html) for details.

From Japan, **Brad Parker** asks the Thoreau Society to consider reducing expenses by cutting out some part of its annual hard-copy periodical output. Brad also urges increased attention to publishing the 1856 Maxham daguerreotype to reflect the parting of Thoreau's hair on the left rather than in reverse.

Thanks to others who sent items, some of which will appear in subsequent issues of the *Bulletin*.

Lower South Branch Pond, Baxter State Park, photographed by Mike Frederick during the Thoreau Society's August 2008 Katahdin excursion.

Notes from Concord

Michael Frederick, Executive Director

Traditionally held on the weekend closest to Thoreau's birthday, the Thoreau Society Annual Gathering features four days of events dedicated to celebrating the life, works, and legacy of Henry D. Thoreau.

This coming year's annual gathering theme for July 9-12, 2009, is "Social Awareness: Thoreau and the Reform Movement." Our keynote speaker will be John T. Matteson, who received the 2008 Pulitzer Prize for biography for his book *Eden's Outcasts: The Story of Louisa May Alcott and Her Father*, published by W.W. Norton in 2007. John has an A.B. in History from Princeton University, a Ph.D. in English from Columbia University, and a law degree from Harvard University. We are delighted to have him as our speaker and encourage our members to participate in this year's events during the gathering.

If you are interested in leading a workshop, a presentation, or a walk, please forward your proposal to the Annual Gathering Committee at info@thoreausociety.org prior to December 15, 2008.

Additionally, the Thoreau Society will host a session at the American Literature Association (ALA) conference in Boston, May 21-24, 2009, titled "Experiential Education: Following in Thoreau's Footsteps." You are invited to submit abstracts for "a round table on how we can educate students today to practice Thoreau's methods of learning, that is his desire to have an 'original relation to the universe' by exploring it. In the twenty-first century, is an original Thoreauvian experience feasible for our students? Whether as observers of natural history, practitioners of civil disobedience, or experimenters with a simple life, how can we demonstrate for students how they can incorporate Thoreau's deliberate consciousness? Can students learn from studying Thoreau's life how they, too, might ignite their passions for learning, reacquaint themselves with their senses, and follow their individual convictions?" Please send a brief (one- or two-paragraph) abstract to Sandy Petrulionis (shp2@psu.edu) and Laura Dassow Walls (wallsld@mailbox.sc.edu) by January 23, 2009.

From the Editor

As I take over editing the *Thoreau Society Bulletin*, I am aware of what big shoes Bob Hudspeth leaves for me to fill. He has done a masterly job of steering the *TSB* after the sudden and sad loss of Brad Dean, his immediate predecessor as editor. Bob has brought to the *Bulletin* not only a deep knowledge of Thoreau's work and world, but also a career's worth of experience with professional editorial practices and a good measure of equanimity in dealing with deadlines and contributors. He has upheld the substantive content and the high standards established by Walter Harding (the first and longest-tenured editor of the *TSB*) and maintained the enthusiasm for all things Thoreauvian that marked Brad Dean's work. Through it all, he has sustained the appeal of the *Bulletin* to the diverse audiences—the multiple approaches to Thoreau—represented among the Thoreau Society's members.

I have much to mull over as I accept this new challenge. But if work on my initial effort is indicative of what will be required to turn out subsequent issues, I believe I will enjoy it. For one thing, the editorial process itself provides its own rewards. Beyond that, editorship of the *Bulletin* places me at a crossroads where scholars and admirers of Thoreau meet as they pursue their respective interests. In my capacity as Curator of the William Munroe Special Collections at the Concord Free Public Library, I'm accustomed to lively exchange with an extended community of minds bound by shared and overlapping interests rather than by geography. I love the far-flung collegiality this situation nurtures and anticipate that the personal and professional connections formed as part of my "day job" will both inform and reflect my work on the *Bulletin*.

From the founding of the Society and the inauguration of the *TSB*, this periodical has aspired to serve not as the voice of its editor but rather of the Society's membership as a whole. In the first issue of the *TSB* (October 1941), Walter Harding expressed his sense of the *Bulletin* as a joint venture: "But make it your bulletin. Send us news of things you want to appear in it. If you find a new article or book on Thoreau, send us word and we'll mention it. If there is a research question you can't answer, send it along, and we'll broadcast it . . . Remember, it's your bulletin." Let me reiterate the fact that it's your bulletin. Now no less than in 1941, the *TSB* will only be as good as you, collectively, make it. So please send me your articles and reviews and bits of news. You can reach me by e-mail at lwilson@minlib.net. If you'd like to talk over an idea for a potential article or some other matter, my phone number at the Concord Free Public Library is (978) 318-3342. 1

look forward to hearing from you. (Bob Hudspeth will continue to compile "Additions to the Thoreau Bibliography," information for which should be sent directly to him at pruessner@earthlink.net.)

A number of silent partners have helped in pulling together this, my first issue of the *TSB*. I want to acknowledge the advice and assistance of Bob Hudspeth, who patiently answered many questions, and of Mike Frederick (Executive Director of the Thoreau Society), who installed new publishing software on my recalcitrant computer. Robert C. Hall—another "Bob," and a working colleague at the Concord Free Public Library—spent significant time setting up templates and handling electronic formatting. Dave Bonney, Ron Hoag, Bob Hudspeth, Sandy Petrulionis, and Laura Dassow Walls provided proofreading assistance and editorial input. My thanks to them all.

Such contributions of time and talent exemplify the collaborative spirit that Walter Harding hoped to encourage in 1941: "Remember, it's your bulletin."

Above: The first Thoreau Society meeting, July 12, 1941. Of the thirteen people pictured, ten are identified on the reverse of the original photograph. Kneeling (left to right): Ted Bailey; Allen French; Walter Harding. Standing: [unidentified]; Alexandra Krastin; Winthrop Lee; [unidentified]; Wallace Conant; Odell Shepard; Roland Sawyer; Raymond Adams; Bertha Joslin; [unidentified].

Below: Thoreau Society luncheon at the Colonial Inn, early to mid-1940s. Concord historian Ruth Robinson Wheeler identified some of those pictured. Near pillar [next to window, with beard]: Allen French. Center [against wall, directly below clock and to the right]: Walter Harding; Raymond Adams. Right [opposite the man whose back is to the column]: Esther Anderson [wearing glasses]; Mrs. Horace Williams [across from Esther Anderson?]; Mr. and Mrs. Bert Chambers [to left of Esther Anderson]. Foreground, left: Bertha Joslin [wearing beret].

Both images come from the Thoreau Society Archives (housed at the Henley Library, Thoreau Institute, Lincoln, Massachusetts).

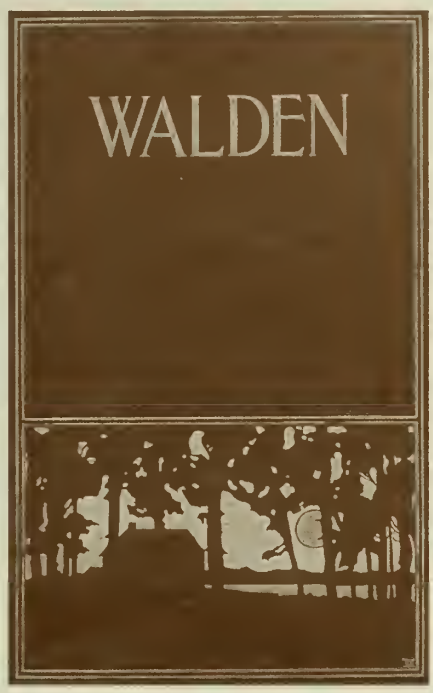
"Nature's Decoration of an Old Pine Stump"—photograph by Herbert Wendell Gleason, from Volume 10 of the 1906 Manuscript Edition of Thoreau's *Journal*.

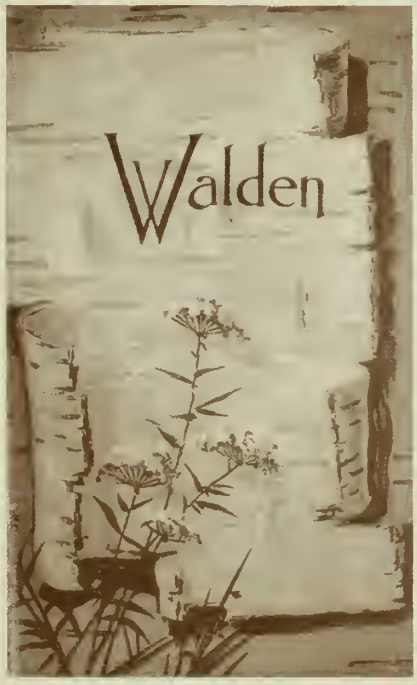
How swift Nature is to repair the damage that man does! When he has cut down a tree and left only a white-topped and bleeding stump, she comes at once to the rescue with her chemistry, and covers it decently with a fresh coat of gray, and in the course of time she adds a thick coat of green cup and bright cockscomb lichens, and it becomes an object of new interest to the lover of nature! Suppose it were always to remain a raw stump instead! It becomes a shell on which this humble vegetation spreads and displays itself, and we forget the death of the larger in the life of the less.

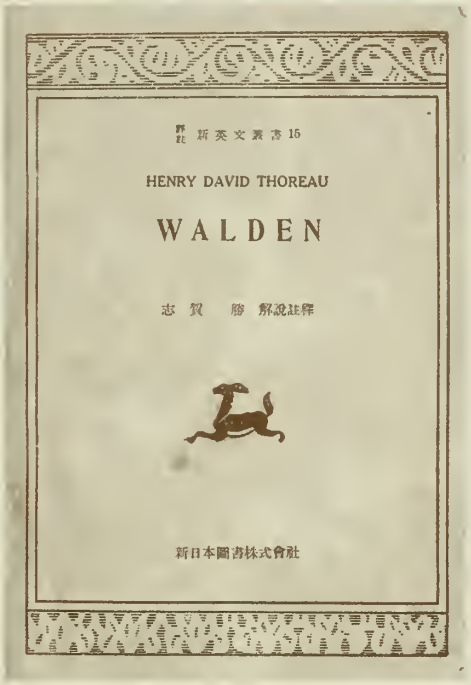
***Journal*, November 2, 1857**

Anton Kovar's Gift to the Thoreau Society

Long-time Thoreau Society member Anton Kovar (1901-1986) of Arlington, Massachusetts, spent a good deal of time in second-hand bookstores in search of editions of Thoreau's *Walden*. He gathered together early printings of the work (including the first, issued by Ticknor and Fields in 1854), later editions (both the luxe and the strictly utilitarian), and foreign-language translations, as well. Kovar presented his collection to the Thoreau Society in 1971. By donor stipulation, it remains in Concord, deposited in the Concord Free Public Library. The Thoreau Society is seeking a capable volunteer to assist in the preparation of a descriptive finding aid for the collection. If you would like to discuss this possibility, contact Leslie Wilson at lwilson@minlib.net or (978) 318-3342.







Four Items from the Kovar Collection

Left, above: A 1902 Houghton, Mifflin printing of *Walden*, with an introduction by Bradford Torrey and photographs by Alfred Winslow Hosmer (Borst, *Henry David Thoreau: A Descriptive Bibliography*, A2.3.i)—a reissue in one volume of the 1897 two-volume "Holiday Edition."
Left, below: *Walden* as issued at New York by T. Y. Crowell & Company (copyright 1899), with an introduction by Charles G. D. Roberts (Borst, A2.5).
Right, above: A Greek edition, in paperback, with illustrative cover printed in color.
Right, below: Selections from *Walden* in Japanese, published at Osaka in 1949.

"Fair Haven Bay through the Woods"—photograph by Herbert Wendell Gleason, from Volume 5 of the 1906 Manuscript Edition of Thoreau's *Journal*.

Climbed the wooded hill by Holden's spruce swamp and got a novel view of the river and Fair Haven Bay through the almost leafless woods. How much handsomer a river or lake such as ours, seen thus through a foreground of scattered or else partially leafless trees, though at a considerable distance this side of it, especially if the water is open, without wooded shores or isles! It is the most perfect and beautiful of all frames, which yet the sketcher is commonly careful to brush aside. I mean a pretty thick foreground, a view of the distant water through the near forest, through a thousand little vistas, as we are rushing toward the former,—that intimate mingling of wood and water which excites an expectation which the near and open view rarely realizes. We prefer that some part be concealed, which our imagination may navigate.

Journal, November 6, 1853

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- To encourage research on Thoreau's life and works and to act as a repository for Thoreau-related materials
- To educate the public about Thoreau's ideas and their application to contemporary life
- To preserve Thoreau's legacy and advocate for the preservation of Thoreau country

Membership in the Society includes subscriptions to its two publications, the *Thoreau Society Bulletin* (published quarterly) and *The Concord Saunterer: A Journal of Thoreau Studies* (published annually). Society members receive a 10% discount on all merchandise purchased from the Thoreau Society Shop at Walden Pond and advance notice about Society programs, including the Annual Gathering.

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